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I HAVE A FINE ASSORTMENT OF  
**SILK FANS**

... WITH HAWAIIAN VIEWS IN COLORS. ...

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"I do lady, but when a fellow's only got a nickel he can't buy Cyrus Norton."

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AGENTS FOR THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS.

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**M. R. COUNTER.**

Watchmaker, Jeweler and Optician.

LOVE BUILDING, FORT STREET.

## LABORERS ARE HERE

Porto Ricans Came on The Rio.

ONLY 56 OF 134 HIRED

Those Seen Seem Contented and Hopeful of Happiness in Hawaii.

On the cabin deck of the Rio yesterday as she swung slowly against the Pacific Mail dock were the much-talked-of Porto Rican laborers and their families. One and all, men, women and children, leaned over the rail and were as interested in gazing upon the shores of their new island home as were the globe-trotters who were their fellow passengers.

True, the Porto Ricans are not a prepossessing lot of people. Porto Rico is not noted for physical beauty in its men and women. Amongst the laboring classes there beauty is not an attribute. The Porto Ricans aboard the Rio show their mixed racial characteristics in face, figure and expression. They are poor people; they were poor in their own land, and those in the band of fifty-six which came yesterday said that Hawaii was to them a land of promise, and not one of terror, as the San Francisco Examiner had painted in hysterical articles relative to these people.

Few of them have much of the world's goods in their possession. Few of them ever knew what it was to possess more than one suit of clothes. Coming from a warm insular climate and suddenly striking into a cold country during their railroad journey across the Mainland they were little prepared to withstand its rigors.

But with their approach to Honolulu the laborers seemed to take on a new lease of life and they were in a happy mood yesterday. The Rio was delayed for a short time awaiting the arrival of these laborers. The vessel waited in the stream at San Francisco while a tug brought them from the railroad. The tug pitched up and down and the greatest difficulty was experienced in getting them aboard. While this process of changing was going on some of the discontented spirits among the Porto Ricans induced nearly half of them to keep off the steamer and refuse to go to Hawaii. The Rio finally had to leave them.

Major Potter, who came on the Rio, says that the stories which have been printed of the "terrible trials" of the Porto Ricans are untrue. The discontented ones among the band were made so by Examiner agents who went among them on the train bearing them across the continent. Even while the laborers were crossing the bay to the Rio an Examiner launch steamed close beside it and the statements that the men were and would be slaves in Hawaii were reiterated until many of them became frightened by the alleged prospects before them and abruptly came to a determination to remain behind. There was everything to discourage the Porto Ricans. They had a rough trip of it from the very start and the shivering facilities were not of the best at any period en route. The very bad weather encountered in California discouraged them still more.

On the passage down on the Rio they seemed to be contented. Through an interpreter an Examiner reporter learned from one of them that he was feeling well and was not alarmed at the prospect before him.

"Do you feel that you are to engage in work that you cannot do?"

"No, señor. I am certain that the change from my country to this will benefit me and my family."

"Do you believe that you are to be a slave, as some people told you in the United States?"

"No, señor. Some of our party did, but I do not. The wages I am to receive are more than I could get in my native country."

As soon as the Rio docked the Lehu came alongside and one by one the Porto Ricans were transferred to the little island steamer which had been engaged to take them to Maui. They chatted pleasantly with the stewards and others who understood their language and bade them affectionate farewells.

Twenty-three Italians from Boston, New York, Washington and Chicago were also among the laborers who came on the Rio. They are to go to Spreckelsville. Happy and contented, these brave sons of Italy, broad of shoulder and deep of chest, were a contrast to the Porto Ricans. They were clothed roughly and for more rigorous weather than they will encounter in Hawaii. As the steamer was docking these rough men gathered on the deck and sang the airs of Italy with voices which had a sincere ring of pleasure in them. One or two had splendid voices and their solo work was greatly admired by the crowds on the dock.

When transferred to the Lehu in company with the Porto Ricans they gathered into little groups and sang blithely. If appearances count for anything they will make splendid workmen.

The following is a letter written to the Examiner at San Francisco by L. A. Thurston, now there. The Examiner's lurid and lying statements in regard to the hardships to be inflicted on the Porto Rican laborers called forth Mr. Thurston's communication:

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 12.—To the Editor of the Examiner:—Sir:—Your paper has recently contained statements concerning the Hawaiian planters and the laborers being recruited to work in Hawaii which appear to be based on incorrect information. Being in a position to know the facts, I beg to state them:

As a result of annexation, rapid expansion of all island industries has taken place. Imports have more than doubled since 1898, while exports have rapidly and largely increased. If nothing interferes, Hawaii's annual trade will amount to \$50,000,000 a year within

two or three years from now. It already amounts to \$35,000,000. The great bulk of this trade is with San Francisco. The number of vessels clearing from San Francisco to Hawaiian ports is nearly as large as the number clearing for all foreign ports and is rapidly increasing. Many millions of dollars' worth of Hawaiian stocks are owned by San Franciscans and a like amount of Hawaiian securities are held by San Francisco banks against loans and investments made in Hawaii. In fact, the relations between Hawaii and San Francisco are so close and intimate that damage to Hawaiian prosperity will mean serious injury to San Francisco interests as well.

The business expansion in Hawaii has caused an increased demand for labor. Annexation has cut off the supply from China. More Japanese are leaving than coming to Hawaii, while immigration from Portugal is now prevented by the United States laws against assisted immigration. These have heretofore been the principal sources of Hawaiian labor supply.

The Hawaiian planters have been and are complying strictly with American immigration laws and are in good faith attempting to recruit laborers in the United States. Prosperous times and high wages have rendered this extremely difficult.

The large surplus population in Porto Rico, the hard times there growing out of the hurricane and the war and the similarity of the climate with that of Hawaii drew attention to Porto Rico.

General Davis, late Governor of Porto Rico, was communicated with and heartily approved of the suggestion to recruit laborers for Hawaii in Porto Rico in the interest of the Porto Ricans themselves. Since his appointment, Governor Allen has also been consulted and expressed a like opinion.

A committee consisting of S. T. Alexander of the firm of Alexander & Baldwin of this city and W. N. Armstrong, formerly Attorney General of Hawaii and recently editor of the Honolulu Advertiser, was sent to Porto Rico to investigate. They reported in favor of both the character of the laborers and their availability. They met in Porto Rico R. A. MacFie, the owner and manager of a sugar plantation there. Mr. MacFie was for a number of years a plantation owner and manager in Hawaii, he there owning the Kilauea plantation. He is a man of education, of independent means and high character. Entertaining a regard for his old home and former business associates, he offered to supervise the recruiting of the laborers in Porto Rico and his offer was gladly accepted as an assurance that the selection of people would be good and the entire enterprise properly handled. He was authorized by the Hawaiian planters to offer the Porto Ricans a free passage to Hawaii for themselves and families; \$20 a month wages, with free residence, fuel, water and medical attendance for three years, or any portion thereof that they might work. This offer was made by him and approximately a hundred men, women and children are now on their way to Hawaii as a trial lot. There is no reason to believe, and every reason not to believe, that Mr. MacFie has made any misrepresentations to these people or made them any promises which the Hawaiian planters will not carry out to the letter. It would be folly to misrepresent or promise more than would be

carried out, for there is no law to compel the laborers to work when they arrive in Hawaii and the demand for labor is such that a man can immediately get work on any other plantation if the one where he is does not suit him. It would be rank foolishness to mistreat or deceive these first arrivals, for upon their favorable report much depends if more Porto Ricans are to be obtained.

These people are in a strange country and their suspicions are easily aroused. It will be easy by mere suggestion of evil to persuade them to refuse to proceed to Hawaii. It will be no kindness to them to do so, however. The laboring class is in a distressful state in Porto Rico. There is no work for them here and the climate will be deadly to them, coming as they do from a warm country. They will simply become a charge on this community. If they are allowed to proceed they will be in a congenial climate similar to their own, free to work where they please, at assured wages far higher than in their own country.

The attempt to obtain these laborers is a fair, open and above board transaction, made in good faith by honorable men, who, if they are allowed, will carry it out to the mutual benefit of the laborers and employers alike.

I suggest that any act tending to throw suspicion or discredit on the motives and good faith of those promoting this immigration which may tend to break it up at this stage is unfair and unfriendly to a kindred community and injurious alike to the interests of your own city and to those of Hawaii.

It will be a cruel act to these people if by suggestion or otherwise they are persuaded or frightened into refusing to proceed to Hawaii.

I submit in all earnestness that you will be doing them a kindness as well as serving the interests of San Francisco if you will promote their procedure to Hawaii, where as free men under the full protection of American laws they will be in a position to judge for themselves and to intelligently report to their fellow countrymen.

LORRIN A. THURSTON.

ly refused to go aboard, saying that they feared Chinese slavery. Captain Leale kept alongside the Rio with the Caroline as long as possible while the timid Porto Ricans were argued with and when he found that talk was useless he brought them to San Francisco and landed the thirty at the Jackson street wharf. There they stood, shivering and half clad, until some kindly disposed person took them to the Wharfinger's office at the foot of Main street. The police were notified of the plight of the wretches, but said they could do nothing for them. They finally fell into charitable hands and were provided with food and lodging for the night.

Jose Morales, a youth of 18 years—ali of them appeared to be boys, some being less than 14 years of age—was the principal spokesman of the party and talked as glibly as his chattering teeth would permit. When asked why they had left the main party he said:

"A man came to us and told us that we were going to be taken to Honolulu and sold as slaves to Chinese." He said there were neither Americans nor Spanish on the Islands at Honolulu and that we would be kept with the Chinese and would only get 25 cents a day and would have to live on that. He said the Islands were full of fever and that the work was very hard. He said that California was a fine place for us to live and told us that the people of San Francisco would take care of us and we could get plenty of work and make \$2 or \$3 a day.

"He said that when we got on the ship where we could not get away we would be treated like slaves and would get very little to eat. We do not want to work with Chinese. We do not like Chinese and we want to stay in California where the people will take care of us."

"Why did you leave your homes?" was asked.

"Because we did not have intelligence enough to remain contented there. Things are very bad there and we were told that we could get plenty of work in the sugar plantations at Honolulu and make plenty of money if we would go there. We made no contracts to work there, but agreed to go and work for a man and pay him back out of our wages what it cost to take us there. We have been given plenty to eat."

"Have you had any trouble with the people who brought you here?"

"No trouble at all. Some man came to us when we were traveling, a week ago, and told us that we were going to have trouble, but we did not believe him. He wanted us to leave the cars, but we would not do it. He came to us many times and at last he told us that we were going to be sold as slaves and would have to work for the Chinese. Then we began to have fear and we liked California and wanted to stay here."

"How are you going to live if you stay here? Have you any money?" was asked.

"We have no money at all, but the man told us that the people here would take care of us; that we would get food and clothing in San Francisco and that there was plenty of work for us on the plantations in California. I think we will stay here. We do not want to go where we will be slaves and we like California."

What That Paper Says About the Porto Ricans in San Francisco. The following is from the San Francisco Chronicle of December 15: Sixty of the 134 Porto Ricans who came across the continent en route to the sugar plantations of Hawaii sailed yesterday afternoon for the islands on the steamer Rio de Janeiro. Seventy-four of them, when they reached the Coast, refused to go further and as a result that number of destitute and helpless people have been thrown upon the charity of San Francisco.

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